

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Review of Submarine Cable Landing License Rules and Procedures to Assess Evolving National Security, Law Enforcement, Foreign Policy, and Trade Policy Risks*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, OI Docket No. 24-523 (June 25, 2026).

Our Build America Agenda has been focused on accelerating the buildout of secure, next-gen infrastructure. And for the most part, Americans can see that infrastructure as they go about their daily lives. You can see cell towers. You can see fiber hanging from utility poles. And you can even see low earth orbit satellites—if you know what you are looking for. But we rely heavily on a network of undersea cables that most of us never think about.

Undersea cables are the unsung heroes of the global internet—carrying up to 99% of global internet traffic. And it is American providers that are leading the world in this segment of the market. American companies dominate the laying, owning, and operating of these cables, as well as the provisioning of the equipment that makes them run. But there is even more we can do to supercharge this industry.

Accelerating submarine cable construction will mean faster and more resilient Internet services for Americans, especially as AI fuels ever greater connectivity demands, and it will also enable our businesses to sell additional services abroad. At the same time, submarine cables face greater threats than ever: bad actors seek access to the sensitive data and communications that run on these cables, and threats from cyber or physical disruptions only grow.

The rules we adopt today strike the right balance. We presumptively exempt cable applications from extensive and time-consuming reviews, but only if such applicants can certify to stringent security standards and agree to ongoing oversight and monitoring. The message is simple: adopt strong national security standards, and get a glide path to application approval.

One other security point of note in these rules. For the first time ever, we are directly licensing owners and operators of what is called Submarine Line Terminal Equipment (SLTE). SLTE is the essential equipment at the endpoints of submarine cables that connect the undersea portion with terrestrial networks. It is also probably the most vulnerable part of the cable system. Our rules today will enhance oversight of SLTE by the FCC and our national security and law enforcement partners.

For their work on this item, I want to thank Tom Sullivan, Denise Coca, Desiree Hanssen, Gabrielle Kim, Hayley Steffen, Svantje Swider, Brenda Villanueva, Justin Cain, Ken Carlberg, Rebecca Clinton, Gregory Haledjian, Leon Kenworthy, and Aleks Yankelevich.